(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, whether Government will consider upon setting up such a Committee?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Whenever there is a proposal to acquire land for defence requirements, a Board of Officers is constituted to recommend the requirement of land as per guidelines prescribed by the Government regarding scale of land authorization. Land is acquired according to requirement and authorization. However, since funds for executing various planned projects are not available in bulk, some of the areas which are otherwise zoned for various units/ installations remain vacant, possibly, giving an impression that the land is being unutilized.

(c) Does not arise.

Disappearance of cargo of explosives meant for BRO

*75. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have completed its probe into the reported disappearance of cargo explosives meant for use by Border Roads Organisation in Afghanistan during its voyage;

(b) if so, the details of the probe findings; and

(c) whether the vessel MV EUGENIA involved in the transit of sensitive cargo had a history of misdeclaration of goods and loitering in the Bay of Bengal for almost a month last July?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) The Government is conducting an investigation into the loss of the explosive consignment meant for use by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) for its project in Afghanistan while it was being shipped from Mumbai to Afghanistan between 22nd and 23rd December, 2005. Six containers containing explosive cargo for the BRO were swept over board from the deck of the ship MV EUGENIA. The manufacturer of the explosives is M/s Premier Explosives Ltd. in accordance with the contractual conditions, the responsibility for the security, shipment, transportation, insurance and delivery to the Project in Afghanistan was that of the manufacturer. BRO

was merely the consignee of these goods. The vessel MV EUGENIA was hired by the manufacturer's shipping agent M/s Unimarine Agencies.

The ship was brought into Mumbai Anchorage on 23rd December, 2005. From the six containers, four have been extricated and their contents verified and found to be in order. Two containers are yet to be traced and the Navy is of the opinion that they may have merged with the wrecks of 2 ships, lying in the same area or drifted away. The four containers have been shifted to the premises of manufacturer M/s Premier Explosives for destruction.

MV EUGENIA had last visited Indian Ports in July to September 2005 and was carrying authorized explosives for the Indonesian Navy. It was reportedly attacked by pirates off Chittagong Port in Bangladesh. The vessel was inspected by various agencies including the Customs Department and the Cargo was certified as a legal consignment for Indonesia. The vessel on its own request was escorted at the time from Kolkata to the entrance of the Malacca Straits by the Indian Coast Guard and Naval Units.

Banning import of fish

*76. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether fish is being imported;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether fishery workers forum have demanded ban on import of fish; and

(d) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The value of fish imports during 2004-05 is Rs. 40.92 crores, and during the first half of the current year (April 2005-September 2005) is Rs. 14.67 crores.

(c) and (d) Some representations have been received from fishermen's organizations for banning import of fish. Import of fish is mainly for the purpose of re-export after value addition. A small amount of fish is also